UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL	Attorney Docket No. **SFT-101**	Total Pages
	First Named Inventor **JEFFREY K. WILKINS**	
	Title **INTERNET-ENABLED LEAD GENERATION**	

APPLICATION ELEMENTS	ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION PARTS
1. [X] Fee Transmittal Form (two copies)	8. [ ] Assignment cover sheet and document(s)
2. [X] Specification　　　Total Pages: [25]	9. [ ] Power of Attorney by Assignee
3. [X] Drawing(s)　　　Total Sheets: [8]	[ ] with CFR 3.73(b) statement
4. [X] Oath or Declaration　Total Pages: [1]	10. [ ] English Translation Document
a. [X] Newly executed (original or copy)	11. [ ] IDS/PTO-1449
b. [ ] Copy from a prior application 1.63(d) (complete Box 17 and note Box 5 below)	[ ] with copies of cited references
i. [ ] Signed statement deleting inventors named in the prior application, see CFR 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b)	12. [ ] Preliminary Amendment
5. [ ] Incorporation by Reference (if 4b is checked) The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied under Box 4b, is considered as being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated therein by reference.	13. [X] Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503)
	14. [ ] Small Entity Statement
	[ ] Statement filed in prior application Status still proper and desired
	15. [ ] Certified Copy of Priority Document(s) (if foreign priority is claimed)
6. [ ] Microfiche Computer Program *(Appendix)*	16. [ ] Other:
7. [ ] Nucleotide/Amino Acid Sequence Submission (all the following are necessary)	
a. [ ] Computer Readable Copy	
b. [ ] Paper Copy (identical to computer copy)	
c. [ ] Statement verifying identity of above copies	

17. If a CONTINUING APPLICATION, check appropriate box and supply the requisite information:

[ ] continuation 　 [ ] divisional 　 [ ] CIP 　 ...of prior application No.: [ ]

18. CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

NAME	MAREK ALBOSZTA LUMEN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SERVICES				
ADDRESS	426 LOWELL AVENUE				
CITY	PALO ALTO	STATE	CA	ZIP CODE	94301
COUNTRY	USA	TELEPHONE	(650) 321-6630	FAX	(650) 321-1621

Certificate of Mailing by "Express Mail"

I hereby certify that I am mailing this correspondence on the date indicated below to the ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, BOX PATENT APPLICATION, WASHINGTON, DC 20231 using the "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service of the United States Postal Service under 37 CFR 1.10.

DATE OF MAILING: 18 Jan. 2000

MAREK ALBOSZTA
REG. NO. 39,894

EXPRESS MAIL LABEL NO: EK447319036US

Patent Application of

Jeffrey K. Wilkins and Jack M. Zoken

5   for

Internet-Enabled Lead Generation

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is based on provisional application 60/116,445 filed 1/19/99, which is herein

10   incorporated by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to a method for obtaining a list of potential purchasers to be used as targets of direct marketing. More particularly, it relates to an Internet-based system

15   for identifying potential future purchasers based on Web-accessible data that is not necessarily related to past or stated purchases.

BACKGROUND ART

Direct marketing is an efficient method of selling that was introduced in the 1960's to take

20   advantage of developments in automation and the study of advertising. Rather than advertise to the general population, marketing efforts are focused on those most likely to purchase, leading to much more cost-effective sales techniques. Based on scientific advertising principles, direct marketing is serviced by increasingly more automated warehousing, shipping, and collection techniques. The phrase was coined in 1961 by Lester Wunderman,

25   commonly regarded as the father of the direct marketing field.

As stated by Wunderman, direct marketing is only effective when certain conditions are met. A prospect must have the ability, willingness, and readiness to buy before a direct sale can be consummated. These three conditions are illustrated using a traditional concept in sales and

30   marketing, the sales funnel, illustrated in **Fig. 1.** Marketers attempt to develop an ideal customer profile and suitable means for communicating with the ideal audience, such as direct mail, telephone solicitations, advertising in trade publications, trade shows, or seminars. Those likely to be interested in a given product or service are termed *suspects*. Suspects that express an interest in the offer, i.e. a willingness to purchase, are known as

prospects. Those prospects with the financial ability to purchase are called *qualified prospects.* *Intenders* are qualified prospects that are ready to purchase in the near future, and it is from the intenders that *customers* are finally generated. Of course, the sales funnel is a broad concept, and the order in which the three conditions (ability, willingness, readiness) are

5 applied to narrow the pool of suspects may be rearranged. The basic principle of the sales funnel is that a more efficient movement down the funnel leads to a decreased marketing and sales cost per eventual purchase.

To date, most direct marketing work aims to ascertain the ability to pay, or the qualified

10 prospects. It is relatively straightforward to use demographic or lifestyle data available from third party data enhancement services, such as household income, to determine a suspect or prospect's ability to pay. However, such data provides little information on willingness or readiness to purchase. Such limitations have been addressed by predictive modeling or surveys of buying intentions. Predictive modeling is a statistical technique that uses various

15 attributes about a prospect to assess a likelihood of buying. These attributes include actual or predicted behavior, attitude as determined from surveys, and collected or overlaid demographic data. Those believed to be unlikely buyers are excluded from costly direct marketing programs, while the most likely buyers are the subjects of intense marketing efforts. Predictive modeling provides the advantages of low cost and scalability.

20

One disadvantage of predictive models is that they may miss key attributes and incorporate stale data. For example, predictive models are often used for predicting purchases of high-ticket items, such as automobiles. However, the intention to buy a new car is often known only after the fact, when new vehicle registration information is available. What is needed is

25 a reliable leading indicator of buying intent. Surveying has been considered the standard for identifying intender leads—consumers with a stated intention of buying a particular class of product within a given time frame. Surveys include questions that assess buying intentions, for example, "Do you plan to buy a new car in the next six months?" The self-reported data is then used to identify intender leads. A significant problem with surveys is that they are

30 inefficient, as measured by the response rate, and expensive, as measured by the cost per completed survey. Furthermore, a link between a consumer's stated future intention and actual action is somewhat tenuous.

Both predictive models and surveys also suffer from a delay between lead generation and distribution to a sales force for pursuit. Even if the leads are of high quality, by the time that they can be distributed using traditional methods, the leads are no longer "hot," i.e. the purchase has already been completed.

5

With the rapid growth of the World Wide Web in recent years, a large amount of effort has been devoted to using the Web for advertising and for collecting marketing and demographic data. When a consumer accesses a web site, the web server often sends a cookie along with the requested page. The cookie is a text string that may be saved to the user's hard drive, and

10 is then read by the web server when the user accesses the same site. The cookie can be used to record user preferences or browsing history. Many web sites have banner ads along the top of the page that are provided directly by an advertising company, which sends a cookie along with the banner ad. Advertising companies use cookies to determine what advertisements the user has already seen, so that the same advertisement is not displayed twice, and also to track

15 the user's browsing history, a potentially useful indicator of the user's interests. Before sending a banner ad to a user, the cookie is read to determine the most effective advertisement to send.

Direct marketers have long collected databases of lifestyle data of people, such as household

20 income, number of children in the family, and hobbies and interests. Examples include Polk's Lifestyle Selector, Acxiom's Infobase, or Metromail/Experian's INSOURCE^{SM}. Now that online behavior can be tracked, and often linked to a person's name, home address, and telephone number, databases containing both online and offline behavior data are being collected. Such information gives direct marketers a rich picture of a user, as well as a variety

25 of means to target consumers, including mail, telephone, email, and banner ads. While the information that is currently gathered is useful for profiling consumers, it does not address the problem of generating intender leads. That is, the information does not indicate buying intent, but rather records past purchases and behavior. Similarly, the information used to determine which banner ad to send is based on past behavior and interests, and is not based on indicators

30 of future purchases.

OBJECTS AND ADVANTAGES

Accordingly, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide a cost-effective method for generating large numbers of intender leads.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a method that uses indicators of future purchases to generate intender leads.

5   It is an additional object of the invention to provide a method that takes advantage of the large amounts of demographic and psychographic data that is available on the Internet and that is constantly being updated.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a method for generating intender leads
10 that is highly scalable.

It is an additional object of the present invention to provide a method that uses a just-in-time delivery system to deliver the intender leads to the desired location so that they can be used for direct marketing while they are still "hot."

15 Finally, it is an object of the present invention to provide a method for generating intender leads that takes advantage of existing direct marketing databases containing full contact and other information to enhance the data that can be extracted from the Internet.

SUMMARY

20 These objects and advantages are attained by a method of generating an intender lead in a distributed computer system, preferably the Internet. The present invention is used to identify large numbers of "hot" intender leads cost effectively, and to distribute them efficiently to a sales force using a just-in-time delivery system. The invention relies on the wealth of
25 continuously updated demographic, psychographic, and behavioral data available on the Internet that can be mined for sales prospects. Once identified, the relevant information identifying the prospect can be extracted and enhanced with direct marketing databases to generate intender leads.

30 The method contains the following steps: identifying purchase indicators representing potential future purchases by prospects; and extracting prospect identifiers, preferably telephone numbers, email addresses, or postal addresses, from the purchase indicators. The prospect identifiers uniquely identify the prospects, which include the intender lead. The purchase indicators are contained within files in the distributed computer system, which are

preferably classified advertising, resumes, auction boards, life change announcements, and postings to newsgroups, discussion forums, and email lists. Purchase indicators include classified automobile sales advertisements, representing future automobile, insurance, or roadside assistance package purchases; classified home sales advertisements, representing future purchases of homes, insurance, telephone or moving serves, or furniture or other large-ticket items; classified boat and RV sales advertisements, representing future purchases of leisure products; resumes, representing future purchases of financial planning services including 401(k) rollover services, or purchases of business products appropriate for the company or job title on the resume; bids for auctioned items, representing future purchases of products or categories corresponding to the bids; requests for purchase recommendations, representing purchases of products corresponding to the requests; engagement or wedding announcements, representing home, household appliance, home insurance, or life insurance purchases; birth announcements, representing infant product purchases; and obituaries, representing financial planning service purchases by a surviving family member.

Preferably, a predictive model is applied to the prospects to select the intender leads. A profile database may be used to obtain additional information, preferably contact information or data enhancement information, associated with the prospects. In the profile database, the additional information is associated with the prospect identifiers. A predictive model may by applied to all types of additional information to select the intender leads from the prospects. The method may also include the step of extracting auxiliary data from the purchase indicators. The auxiliary data is independent of the prospect, and may contain information about the indicator itself or about the potential future purchase. For example, the auxiliary data may be a classification of a product or category of the potential future purchases. The predictive model may also be applied to the auxiliary data to select the intender leads from the prospects.

Preferably, the method also has the step of transferring the intender leads or contact information for the intender leads to an interested party. The transfer preferably occurs before the potential future purchase. Alternatively, a direct marketing contact with an intender represented by the intender lead may be initiated.

The present invention also provides a program storage device accessible by a server machine in a distributed computer system, preferably the Internet. The storage device tangibly

embodies a program of instructions executable by the server machine to perform method steps for generating an intender lead. These method steps are the method steps of the present invention as described above.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram of a sales funnel as known in the prior art.

Fig. 2 is a block diagram of a method of the present invention.

Fig. 3 shows a prior art web page for searching online automobile classifieds.

Fig. 4 is a block diagram of a method for extracting prospect identifiers and auxiliary data from classified advertisements according to the present invention.

Fig. 5 shows an excerpt from a prior art classified advertising web page.

Fig. 6 illustrates the normalization of a classified advertisement.

Fig. 7 shows a prospect identifier and associated contact information for a prospect.

Fig. 8 shows a prior art web-based classified advertisement.

Fig. 9 illustrates an intender lead according to the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Although the following detailed description contains many specifics for the purposes of illustration, anyone of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that many variations and alterations to the following details are within the scope of the invention. Accordingly, the following preferred embodiment of the invention is set forth without any loss of generality to, and without imposing limitations upon, the claimed invention.

The present invention provides a method for generating intender leads—leads for people with a stated or likely intention of purchasing a particular product within a given time frame. The intender leads are then used as targets of diversified direct marketing campaigns. The present invention considers two of the categories included in the sales funnel 10 of Fig. 1. First, prospects are located—people with some likelihood of making a purchase in the near future. In the present invention, prospects are identified by their association with a purchase indicator, an indicator of a potential future purchase. From the pool of identified prospects, intender leads are generated using predictive models. All of the prospects may be intenders, but it is preferable that the list of prospects is furthered narrowed to generate intender leads. The specifics of the implementation of the invention differ depending on the particular domain of application. However, the basic principles of the invention may be applied to any

domain by recognizing appropriate purchase indicators for each domain. A primary application domain is automobile purchases, for which classified advertising for automobile sales is used as a purchase indicator.

5   A preferred embodiment of the invention is shown in **Fig. 2**, a block diagram of the method of the present invention occurring in the Internet **12.** While the present invention may occur within any distributed computer system, the Internet is preferable, because it is a publicly accessible source of information about the general public. In particular, the Internet provides access to continuously updated demographic and psychographic data that can be correlated

10   with sales intentions. Within the Internet **12** are files or documents **14, 16, 18,** and **20** that contain purchase indicators—indicators of potential future purchases by prospects. Files **14-20** may be any types of file containing purchase indicators. Typically, files **14-20** will be text files or documents, but they may also be image, audio, video, database files, tables, or other media files. Preferably, files **14-20** contain classified advertising, resumes, auction boards,

15   life change announcements, or postings to newsgroups, discussion forums, or email lists. Files **14-20** are typically accessed through a publicly accessible web site.

An important step in the present invention is determining appropriate purchase indicators for the desired future purchase. Appropriate purchase indicators must be leading indicators; that

20   is, they must represent a near future purchase, so that direct marketing can occur when the intender is contemplating a purchase, but before the purchase is completed. In the case of automobile purchases, our proprietary studies have shown that classified automobile sales advertisements are a useful leading indicator, because more than half of all car sellers are also contemporaneously purchasing vehicles. Automobile sellers are also likely to purchase

25   automobile insurance or roadside assistance packages. According to the Newspaper Association of America, private individuals sell more than 42 million vehicles each year in the United States. A variety of Internet-accessible classified sources are available, including Internet-only classified web sites, Web-based newspaper classifieds, and Internet discussion forums, such as newsgroups or mailing lists, in which automobiles are listed for sale by the

30   owners. Most United States newspapers are accessible over the Internet, with the same or slightly different content. Many web portals, such as Yahoo, also contain classified listings that are not taken from newspapers, but that users enter directly into the web site.

After the desired sources **14-20** have been located, purchase indicators are identified from files **14-20** in step **22.** Step **22** may be performed using an automated spider that has been designed to locate the particular part of the file containing the classified advertisement. A particular spider will be discussed further below. The purchase indicator (e.g. individual classified advertisement) may be downloaded from the Web onto a server by the automated spider for further processing. The automated spider must be tailored to each particular web site, because advertising is accessed differently from each web site. Each potential web site must first be accessed manually to learn how an individual advertisement is obtained. Typically, advertisements are either directly accessible by following hyperlinks, or behind a CGI script, accessible only by entering a search string into a text bar or clicking a search button. **Fig. 3** shows a web page **50** of an exemplary classified site. A variety of scroll boxes **52** are displayed, in which a user selects the type of automobile desired, and a search is performed when the user clicks the Submit button **54.** Both types of advertisements (hyperlink and script) may be accessed using an automated spider. The automated spider may access each web site with any desired frequency, which may depend upon the frequency at which the web site is updated.

Each purchase indicator identified in step **22** contains a prospect identifier, such as a telephone number, email address, or postal address, that uniquely identifies the prospect for a potential future sale. In typical newspaper classified advertisements, only a telephone number is included. In step **24,** the prospect identifier is extracted from the purchase indicator. The listed telephone number often does not include an area code, and further processing is needed to obtain a full telephone number. For example, listings in a local newspaper often exclude the local area code unless the seller's area code is different (e.g. from a nearby area with a different area code). In the case of automobile advertisements, in which the goal is to identify automobile intender leads, a further step of excluding classified advertisements of automobile dealers is necessary. A table of car dealer telephone numbers can be created, seeded with telephone numbers mentioned multiple times in the same edition of the classifieds or with numbers from an advertisement referencing multiple vehicles. Conventional direct marketing telephone number lists of car dealers can also be purchased and used to identify and suppress dealer listings.

Telephone direct marketing can be conducted using only a list of the full telephone number obtained from the purchase indicator. That is, the list of generated intender leads may be a

list of telephone numbers or other prospect identifiers obtained in step **24.** However, for the present invention, it is preferable that further data analysis and enhancement be conducted in order to select a group of intenders from the full list of prospects. Without further analysis, it is likely that only a small percentage of the intender leads will produce actual customers.

5   With further analysis described below, it is possible to generate a list of intender leads for which a much larger percentage will be customers.

Preferably, in step **26,** auxiliary data is extracted by the spider from the purchase indicators identified and downloaded in step **22.** The auxiliary data is independent of the prospect. For

10   example, for automobile advertisements, auxiliary data may be information about the vehicle being sold. Such information may be useful for determining lifestyle characteristics of the prospect, or for determining the type of vehicle the prospect is likely to purchase next. Typically, this information is in a semi-structured format that is not useful for large-scale analysis. Classified advertisements usually contain cryptic abbreviations and acronyms to

15   save space, and this information must be identified and translated into a standard format in step **26.** Extraction and translation of auxiliary information is highly tailored to the particular type of purchase indicator used.

In step **30,** full contact information is obtained for the prospect using a profile database **32.**

20   Profile database **32** contains a list of prospect identifiers, such as telephone numbers, associated with names, addresses, and other information. Direct marketing companies such as The Polk Company or Metromail offer services to append the name and home postal address associated with a telephone number; this service is known as a reverse white pages lookup. Most commonly, the information provided is the name and address found in conventional

25   telephone book white pages. Typically, 35-40% of telephone numbers can be tied to a name and postal address in this way. Internet white pages web sites, such as InfoSpace (www.infospace.com) offer the same service free of charge. Locating contact information for unlisted telephone numbers is more difficult, but in some cases this information may be obtained from self-reported survey information or other sources. For example, product

30   registration information often contains unlisted telephone numbers. Combining all available examples of profile database **32** may result in match rates of between 40 and 50%. It is to be understood that profile database **32** may be a single source or a combination of sources such as web sites, locally owned databases, or direct marketing services.

Other information, such as data enhancement information **34,** may also be obtained from profile database **32** or other suitable source. As used here, the term data enhancement information includes behavioral, demographic, and psychographic information. Traditionally, such data enhancement has been performed using services such as Polk's Lifestyle Selector, Acxiom's Infobase, or Metromail/Experian's INSOURCE^{SM}, or databases from infoUSA or Dun & Bradstreet. These services record information such as household income, hobbies, and past purchasing habits. Currently, databases are being collected to link typical "off-line" data with online behavior data. Such databases include 24/7 Media's Profilz™ database, which stores information such as web surfing behavior (sites visited and time per site), participation in Internet discussion forums, and on-line registration information. When a consumer registers a purchase of a product at a company's web site, off-line identification can be associated with online habits to obtain a very broad characterization of a particular user.

A predictive model is applied in step **36** to contact information obtained in step **30,** and preferably also to data enhancement information **34** and auxiliary data extracted in step **26.** Step **36** generates a set of intender leads **38** from the set of prospects obtained from the purchase indicators. Predictive modeling is a technique known in the art that is used to better assess a prospect's likelihood of making a purchase. A comprehensive overview of predictive modeling techniques is available in David Shepard Associates, *The New Direct Marketing: How to Implement a Profit-Driven Database Marketing Strategy,* 2nd Ed., Irwin Professional Pub., New York, 1994; and Banslaben, John, "Predictive Modeling," pp. 620-636, in *The Direct Marketing Handbook,* 2nd Ed., Edward Nash, ed., McGraw-Hill, Inc., New York, 1992.

For example, selling a vehicle is a major indicator of intention to purchase a car: our preliminary studies indicate that more than 50% of car sellers plan to purchase a vehicle within thirty days of listing their old car for sale. However, in some cases, a car seller may have already purchased a vehicle prior to listing the car for sale, or is selling a vehicle with no intention of buying another car. Predictive modeling can be used to better assess a car seller's likely course of action. A predictive model uses certain attributes of the seller to predict whether the seller is likely to buy a new car, used car, or no vehicle. Suitable attributes include make/model/year of the vehicle being sold, household income, presence of spouse or children in the home, and various other lifestyle metrics. A more sophisticated model can be used to predict which vehicle a car seller is likely to buy. This is particularly important so that sales and marketing efforts can focus on the right intenders. For example, a BMW

dealership should not waste time trying to sell a vehicle to a potential buyer who doesn't have sufficient income to afford the car. Similarly, a family is unlikely to purchase a two-seat sports car.

5   Finally, in step **40**, intender leads **38** are transferred to an interested party, preferably using the Internet **12'**. Because intender leads **38** are "hot," they are preferably transferred to the interested party as soon as possible, and most preferably before the potential future purchase is completed. For example, leads **38** may be emailed or faxed to the interested party at scheduled intervals, or they may be located at a secure web site accessed only by those given

10   permission. The interested party is usually a field sales force, but may be any person, group, or organization interested in sales or marketing of the particular product referred to by intender leads **38**. Alternatively, in step **42**, intender leads **38** may be used to initiate a direct marketing contact.

15   Intender leads **38** that are transferred to the interested party may contain varying amounts of information. For example, they may contain only contact information (name and address), or they may also include data enhancement information or auxiliary data about the type or product of the future purchase. They may also contain results of predictive modeling, such as specifics, e.g. car model, of a likely future purchase. As desired, intender leads may also

20   include a portion or all of the purchase indicator, so that the interested party may perform additional modeling and analysis. Note that the term intender refers to a person who intends to make a purchase, while the term intender lead refers to the information that is transferred, or the person as identified as a lead for marketing contacts.

25   Steps **22, 24,** and **26** must be specialized for each particular domain of interest. An automated spider can be designed to perform the steps automatically for a given domain. One example of a spider is known as the Web Auto Classifieds Aggregator, shown schematically in **Fig. 4.** The Aggregator is located on a server computer within the distributed computer system. The spider of Fig. 4 is used for traditional classified advertising, as shown in **Fig. 5,** typically

30   found on web sites of standard newspapers, such as the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Listing page **90** of Fig. 5 looks like a typical newspaper classified advertisement, with cryptic words and acronyms. The automated spider must be able to extract information from the variety of words and formats included. Note that each individual listing contains different types of information; only the first lists the number of doors and speeds, while only the fourth contains

color information (blk/blk). The same word is abbreviated in multiple ways, such as Snrf or sunrf for sunroof. Abbreviations such as nu, excl, exc, tim, obo, and pwr are used. Telephone numbers are listed with different formats. The automated spider translates this semi-structured information into a structured format.

5

Referring again to Fig. 4, the first component of the Web Auto Classified Aggregator is the web classified sources configuration file **60,** used to locate the sources, i.e., documents **14-20** of Fig. 2, containing purchase indicators. In a preferred embodiment, these sources are defined in configuration file **60** according to the following definition records:

10

```
================================================================
#
# Source:    Source Name, City, State
# Source URL:  Base URL of source
# Area Code:   Area code of source
#
# Start Marker:  [Optional] Ignore text before this string
# Stop Marker:   [Optional] Ignore text after this string
#
# Ads URL:     full / partial URL (from base) to classifieds
# Old Ads URL: [Optional] full / partial URL (from base) to classifieds
#
#    Remaining URL      Description
#    Remaining URL      Description
#
================================================================
```

In step **62,** the sources included in file **60** are loaded into a database source table **64,** and an ID is generated for each source. Table **64** is used to generate (step **66**) a page table **68** that contains a record for each potential web page located within each source. Each source web page is downloaded in step **70** onto the server into a specified directory, tables **64** and **68** are used to locate the desired pages. In step **72,** the classifieds are normalized: individual advertisements are extracted from each page, and the prospect identifier and auxiliary data are extracted from each advertisement. An attempt is made to obtain values for a set of specified

fields, such as automobile make, model, year, mileage, and price. A normalizer configuration file **74** specifies how to divide pages to locate individual advertisements, and also contains a list of car makes and mappings of models to makes. Common misspellings are specified explicitly in file **74,** and a reverse mapper maps misspellings to a single correct spelling.

5 Depending on what data is required to be extracted, other information may also be included in configuration file **74.** For each required field, the normalizer program "guesses" which fragment of the advertisement corresponds to a particular field, using configuration file **74.** For example, the guess for the price field has two conditions: a number and a dollar sign. The advertisement is then rated for confidence in the guesses: high confidence corresponds to one

10 guess for each field, two guesses for one field, or two guesses for two fields. All other advertisements receive a low confidence rating. Normalized high confidence advertisements are stored in a "good" file **78,** and normalized low confidence advertisements are stored in a "bad" file **76.** Bad file **76** may also contain records of advertisements lacking required fields, such as telephone number or other prospect identifier or car make.

15

The data in good file **78** is loaded into a database table **86** in step **80.** If there is already a row in the table with the same telephone number, make, and model, the record is assumed to be a duplicate; this occurs when the same advertisement runs for multiple days or weeks. Next, in step **82,** records identified as belonging to dealers are flagged, either by comparing telephone

20 numbers with a database of dealer telephone numbers, or by locating multiple records with the same telephone number. Dealer records may be deleted from table **86** or kept in with a flag, and dealer telephone numbers may be recorded in a file for future use. Note that table **86** does not yet include full contact information or data enhancement information corresponding to the prospect identifier. Table **86** stores information for prospects, which

25 will be analyzed with a predictive model to select intender leads.

Files **76** and **78** may be used to identify models that are not already contained in configuration file **74.** Apparent models that occur repeatedly, or various misspellings of models, are added to configuration file **74** in step **84.** In this way, configuration file **74** is constantly updated to

30 include a wider range of makes and models.

Fig. 6 illustrates in more detail the normalization step **72** of Fig. 4, as well as steps **22, 24,** and **26** of Fig. 2. Classified page **90** of Fig. 5 is divided into individual advertisements, as shown by the dotted lines of page **100** in Fig. 6. A particular advertisement **102** is identified, and

telephone numbers **104** and auxiliary data **106** are extracted from advertisement **102.** The first telephone number listed has an area code, but the second telephone number does not have an area code. In this case, the same area code is appended to the second telephone number, rather than the area code of the city of the newspaper. Normalizer configuration file

5   **108** is then used to guess the words and phrases of advertisement **106** to assign to each required field. The guessed phrases are expanded as necessary (e.g. 87k becomes 87,000) to arrive at normalized data **110,** which is then added as a record in database table **112.**

As shown in **Fig. 7,** prospect identifier **104** is located within a profile database **114** to obtain

10   contact information **116** and data enhancement information **118** for the prospect, Barbara Murphy. A predictive model may be applied to combined information **120** and auxiliary data stored in table **112** to determine whether the prospect is an intender, and thereby gather a list of intender leads from the list of prospects. Combined information **120** is an example of an intender lead that may be sent to the interested party. The intender lead may also contain a

15   likely purchase **122,** determined by applying a predictive model. An intender lead may contain all or some of the information in combined information **120** and likely purchase **122,** or it may include the auxiliary data or other information, depending upon the needs of the interested party, data availability, or economic constraints.

20   **Fig. 8** shows an alternate type of classified advertisement **120,** located on an Internet-only classified site, such as Yahoo. Advertisement **120** is much easier to process, because the information has already been formatted into a highly structured file. All of the required fields are listed without abbreviation and in particular locations. The spider for the source containing advertisement **120** must be programmed to access each particular field, and

25   guessing is not required. Advertisement **120** also contains full contact information.

Intender leads for any other domain of interest may be generated using the present invention. Appropriate purchase indicators, both active and passive, and the sources containing such indicators, must be determined, and spiders written. Active indicators are those created by the

30   prospect, and passive indicators are determined without the prospect's input. One example is moving, which has been identified by direct marketers as an important life event that triggers the purchase of numerous products and services. New movers are more likely to purchase home owner's insurance, furniture, appliances, automobile insurance, telephone and moving services, and other home products. According to the National Association of Realtors,

approximately 4.7 million existing single-family homes were sold in the United States during 1998. There is therefore a substantial opportunity for direct marketers serving this market.

5   The present invention takes advantage of this large pool of prospects by identifying listings of homes for sale as purchase indicators. Listings are available on real estate, classified, and local multiple-listing web sites. Often, listings provide the street address of the property for sale, in addition to the name and telephone number of the agent listing the property. The name and telephone number of the owner or occupant is often not available. In some cases, the listing may refer to only a neighborhood within a city, or not even include the city, state, 10   or zip code. If available, the address of the property may be used to determine the name and telephone number of the owner and relevant demographic data from a direct marketing service, such as Polk's LifeStyles or Experian's INSOURCE[SM]. In prior art methods for generating intender leads for movers, post-moving indicators, such as property sale records, are used. These leads may be several months old, and therefore much less valuable than leads 15   generated by the present invention, which indicate future moves.

Classified advertisements can be used as purchase indicators for many products, not simply home- or auto-related products. For example, sellers of boats or recreational vehicles (RVs) are often likely to purchase leisure products in the future. Leisure products include boat 20   accessories, outdoor clothing, and camping equipment, or any product useful in an RV or boat. These classified advertisements may be processed in a manner similar to the processing of automobile advertisements described above. Purchase indicators of the present invention may be classified advertisements for any products, and are not limited to examples specifically listed.

25

An additional source for prospects and intender leads are job changers, who are candidates for an array of direct marketing offers, such as 401(k) rollover services or other financial planning services. For an active purchase indicator, resumes posted to career web sites can be used. Typically, all contact information, including name, home address, home telephone 30   number, and email address, can be extracted from online resumes, as well as educational and career data.

A passive indicator of a job changer is a newly undeliverable work email address. Since email addresses may be undeliverable for both transient and permanent reasons, it is

necessary first to process the undeliverable notification to identify the reason an email address is invalid. In the standard convention used for business email addresses (e.g. user-id@companyname.com), an invalid user-id may indicate a job change, particularly if the user-id was valid at one time, but is no longer valid. This typically rules out a keying error as the

5   source of the problem. Once identified, email addresses are matched against a database of names, email addresses, home postal addresses, and home telephone numbers to identify the appropriate contact information to use for marketing activities.

Resumes are also useful for obtaining information about a job seeker's current job. Resumes

10   usually contain job titles, company names, and business contact information. Corresponding future purchases include business products appropriate for the company or the job title. For example, accountants at all companies may be future purchases of accounting software.

Another large source of purchase indicators are Internet discussion forums, email lists,

15   newsgroups, web bulletin boards, and auction boards, which are typically organized by vocational or avocational interests. Discussion forums, newsgroups, and bulletin boards vary in format, but operate on the same basic principle: a network of users communicate with one another about a particular subject, and each user may access postings written by all other users. For the present invention, purchase indicators are not simply participation in a

20   discussion about a particular subject, but are messages or postings stating an interest in purchasing a particular product or service or a request for purchase recommendations. The potential future purchase is a product or service corresponding to the request. For example, a user intending to purchase an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for his or her company may ask for advice or opinions about Oracle, SAP, and PeopleSoft. In step **22** of

25   Fig. 2, purchase indicators in discussion forums are identified using natural language processing. For example, the phrase "I am looking for ..." may indicate that a user intends a purchase. Classification of the product of the potential future purchase must also be performed. Often, the taxonomy of the forum can be used to classify the purchase, but a separate ontology, for example, one that recognizes that SAP is an ERP vendor, may also be

30   applied to the purchase indicator. An ontology for workstation products "knows" that Sun, HP, DEC, IBM, and SGI offer workstations, as well as the myriad product names and model numbers offered by each. Common ways of referring to the product category (e.g. file server, database server, desktop, deskside) are also included. A typical intender lead **130** taken from a discussion forum is shown in **Fig. 9.** Intender lead **130** includes a purchase indicator **132**

that was identifed using an automated spider. Purchase indicator **132** is a message that was posted to a helpdesk newsgroup. Posting **132** contains a name and email address, facilitating obtaining full contact information **134.** Intender lead **130** also contains auxiliary data **136** identifying the products of potential future purchases.

Web-based auction boards contain similar information. Bids for auctioned items are purchase indicators showing an interest in purchasing the auctioned item or category of item, or similar items. Similarly, sellers listing items for sale at auctions may be purchasing replacement items in the future. For the present invention, auction sellers are similar to people advertising items for sale in classified listings.

Another large source of purchase indicators are life change announcements found in online newspapers. Life change announcements include birth announcements, graduation announcements, wedding or engagement announcements, and obituaries. Local newspapers may contain a larger number of announcements than national, well-known newspapers. Wedding or engagement announcements indicate future purchases of homes, household appliances, or home or life insurance. Birth announcements indicate future purchases of infant products, such as strollers, intercom systems, diaper services, clothing, day care services, and other products and services. Obituaries indicate potential future purchases by a surviving spouse or other family members. Surviving family members often purchase financial services and products, such as investment services.

It will be clear to one skilled in the art that the above embodiment may be altered in many ways without departing from the scope of the invention. Accordingly, the scope of the invention should be determined by the following claims and their legal equivalents.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   1.   In a distributed computer system, a method of generating an intender lead, said
2.   method comprising the steps of:
3.   a)   identifying purchase indicators representing potential future purchases by
4.   prospects, said purchase indicators being contained within files in said
5.   distributed computer system; and
6.   b)   extracting prospect identifiers from said purchase indicators, wherein said
7.   prospect identifiers identify said prospects, and said prospects comprise said
8.   intender lead.

1.   2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of applying a predictive
2.   model to said prospects to select said intender lead.

1.   3.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of transferring said
2.   intender lead to an interested party.

1.   4.   The method of claim 3 wherein said transferring step occurs before said
2.   potential future purchases.

1.   5.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of initiating a direct
2.   marketing contact with an intender represented by said intender lead.

1.   6.   The method of claim 1 wherein said prospect identifiers are selected from the
2.   group consisting of telephone numbers, email addresses, and postal addresses.

1.   7.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of obtaining additional
2.   information associated with said prospects from a profile database, wherein
3.   said additional information is associated with said prospect identifiers in said
4.   profile database.

1
2

8.   The method of claim 7 wherein said additional information comprises contact information for said prospects.

1
2

9.   The method of claim 7 wherein said additional information comprises data enhancement information for said prospects.

1
2
3

10.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of extracting auxiliary data from said purchase indicators, wherein said auxiliary data is independent of said prospects.

1
2
3
4

11.   The method of claim 1 wherein said files are selected from the group consisting of classified advertising, resumes, auction boards, life change announcements, and postings to newsgroups, discussion forums, and email lists.

1
2
3
4

12.   The method of claim 11 wherein said purchase indicators comprise classified automobile sales advertisements, and said potential future purchases are selected from the group consisting of automobile, automobile insurance, and roadside assistance package purchases.

1
2
3
4

13.   The method of claim 11 wherein said purchase indicators comprise classified home sales advertisements, and said potential future purchases are selected from the group consisting of home, home insurance, telephone service, and moving service purchases.

1
2
3

14.   The method of claim 11 wherein said purchase indicators comprise classified boat and RV sales advertisements, and said potential future purchases comprise leisure product purchases.

1
2
3

15.   The method of claim 11 wherein said purchase indicators comprise resumes, and said potential future purchases comprise financial planning services comprising 401(k) rollover services.

1
2
3
4

16. The method of claim 11 wherein said purchase indicators comprise resumes comprising a current job title, company, and contact information, and said potential future purchases comprise purchases of business products appropriate for said company and said job title.

1
2
3

17. The method of claim 11 wherein said postings comprise requests for purchase recommendations, and said potential future purchases comprise purchases of products corresponding to said requests.

1
2
3

18. The method of claim 11 wherein said auction boards comprise bids for auctioned items, and said potential future purchases comprise purchases of items similar to said auctioned items.

1
2
3
4
5

19. The method of claim 11 wherein said purchase indicators are selected from the group consisting of engagement announcements and wedding announcements, and said potential future purchases are selected from the group consisting of home, household appliances, home insurance, and life insurance purchases.

1
2
3

20. The method of claim 11 wherein said purchase indicators comprise birth announcements, and said potential future purchases comprise infant product purchases.

1
2
3

21. The method of claim 11 wherein said purchase indicators comprise obituaries, and said potential future purchases comprise financial planning service purchases made by a surviving family member.

1
2

22. The method of claim 1 wherein said distributed computer system is the Internet.

1
2

23. In a distributed computer system, a method of generating an intender lead, said method comprising the steps of:

3	a)	identifying purchase indicators representing potential future purchases by
4		prospects, said purchase indicators being contained within files in said
5		distributed computer system, said prospects including said intender lead;
6	b)	extracting prospect identifiers from said purchase indicators;
7	c)	obtaining contact information for said prospects from a profile database,
8		wherein said contact information is associated with said prospect identifiers in
9		said profile database;
10	d)	applying a predictive model to said prospect identifiers and said contact
11		information to select said intender lead from said prospects; and
12	e)	transferring contact information for said intender lead to an interested party.

| 1 | 24. | The method of claim 23 wherein said transferring step occurs before said |
| 2 | | potential future purchases. |

| 1 | 25. | The method of claim 23 wherein said prospect identifiers are selected from the |
| 2 | | group consisting of telephone numbers, email addresses, and postal addresses. |

1	26.	The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of obtaining data
2		enhancement information from said profile database, wherein said data
3		enhancement information is associated with said prospect identifiers, and
4		wherein said predictive model is further applied to said data enhancement
5		information to select said intender lead from said prospects.

1	27.	The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of extracting auxiliary
2		data from said purchase indicators, wherein said auxiliary data is independent
3		of said prospect identifiers, and wherein said predictive model is further
4		applied to said auxiliary data to select said intender lead from said prospects.

| 1 | 28. | The method of claim 27 wherein said auxiliary data includes a |
| 2 | | classification of a product of said potential future purchases. |

| 1 | 29. | The method of claim 23 wherein said files are selected from the group |
| 2 | | consisting of classified advertising, resumes, auction boards, life change |

3   announcements, and postings to newsgroups, discussion forums, and email

4   lists.

1   30.   The method of claim 29 wherein said purchase indicators comprise

2   classified automobile sales advertisements, and said potential future

3   purchases are selected from the group consisting of automobile,

4   automobile insurance, and roadside assistance package purchases.

1   31.   The method of claim 29 wherein said purchase indicators comprise

2   classified home sales advertisements, and said potential future

3   purchases are selected from the group consisting of home, home

4   insurance, telephone service, and moving service purchases.

1   32.   The method of claim 23 wherein said distributed computer system is the

2   Internet.

1   33.   A program storage device accessible by a server machine in a distributed computer

2   system, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by said server

3   machine to perform method steps for generating an intender lead, said method steps

4   comprising:

5   a)   identifying purchase indicators representing potential future purchases by

6   prospects, said purchase indicators being contained within files in said

7   distributed computer system; and

8   b)   extracting prospect identifiers from said purchase indicators, wherein said

9   prospect identifiers identify said prospects, and said prospects comprise said

10   intender lead.

1   34.   The program storage device of claim 33 wherein said method steps further

2   comprise applying a predictive model to said prospects to select said intender

3   lead.

1   35.   The program storage device of claim 33 wherein said method steps further

2   comprise transferring said intender lead to an interested party.

SFT-101

36.   The program storage device of claim 35 wherein said transferring step occurs before said potential future purchases.

37.   The program storage device of claim 33 wherein said method steps further comprise initiating a direct marketing contact with an intender represented by said intender lead.

38.   The program storage device of claim 33 wherein said prospect identifiers are selected from the group consisting of telephone numbers, email addresses, and postal addresses.

39.   The program storage device of claim 33 wherein said method steps further comprise obtaining additional information associated with said prospects from a profile database, wherein said additional information is associated with said prospect identifiers in said profile database.

40.   The program storage device of claim 39 wherein said additional information comprises contact information for said prospects.

41.   The program storage device of claim 39 wherein said additional information comprises data enhancement information for said prospects.

42.   The program storage device of claim 33 wherein said method steps further comprise extracting auxiliary data from said purchase indicators, wherein said auxiliary data is independent of said prospects.

43.   The program storage device of claim 33 wherein said files are selected from the group consisting of classified advertising, resumes, auction boards, life change announcements, and postings to newsgroups, discussion forums, and email lists.

44.   The program storage device of claim 43 wherein said purchase indicators comprise classified automobile sales advertisements, and
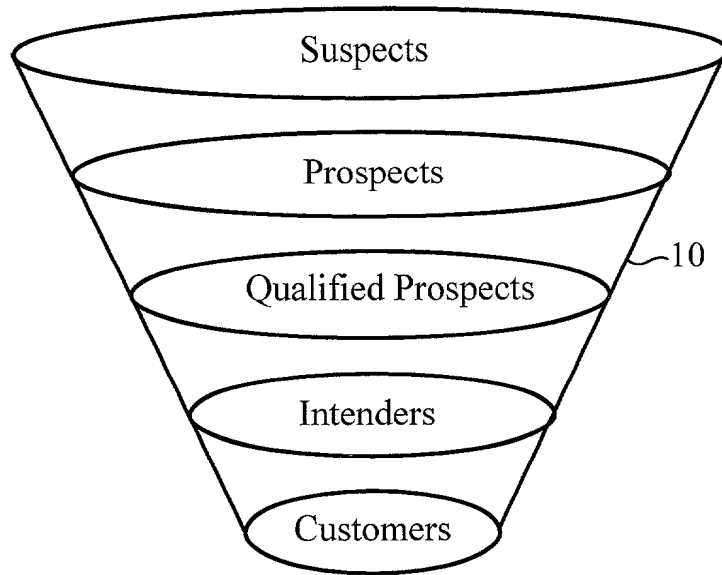
23

3
4
5

said potential future purchases are selected from the group consisting of automobile, automobile insurance, and roadside assistance package purchases.

1
2
3
4
5

45.   The program storage device of claim 43 wherein said purchase indicators comprise classified home sales advertisements, and said potential future purchases are selected from the group consisting of home, home insurance, telephone service, and moving service purchases.
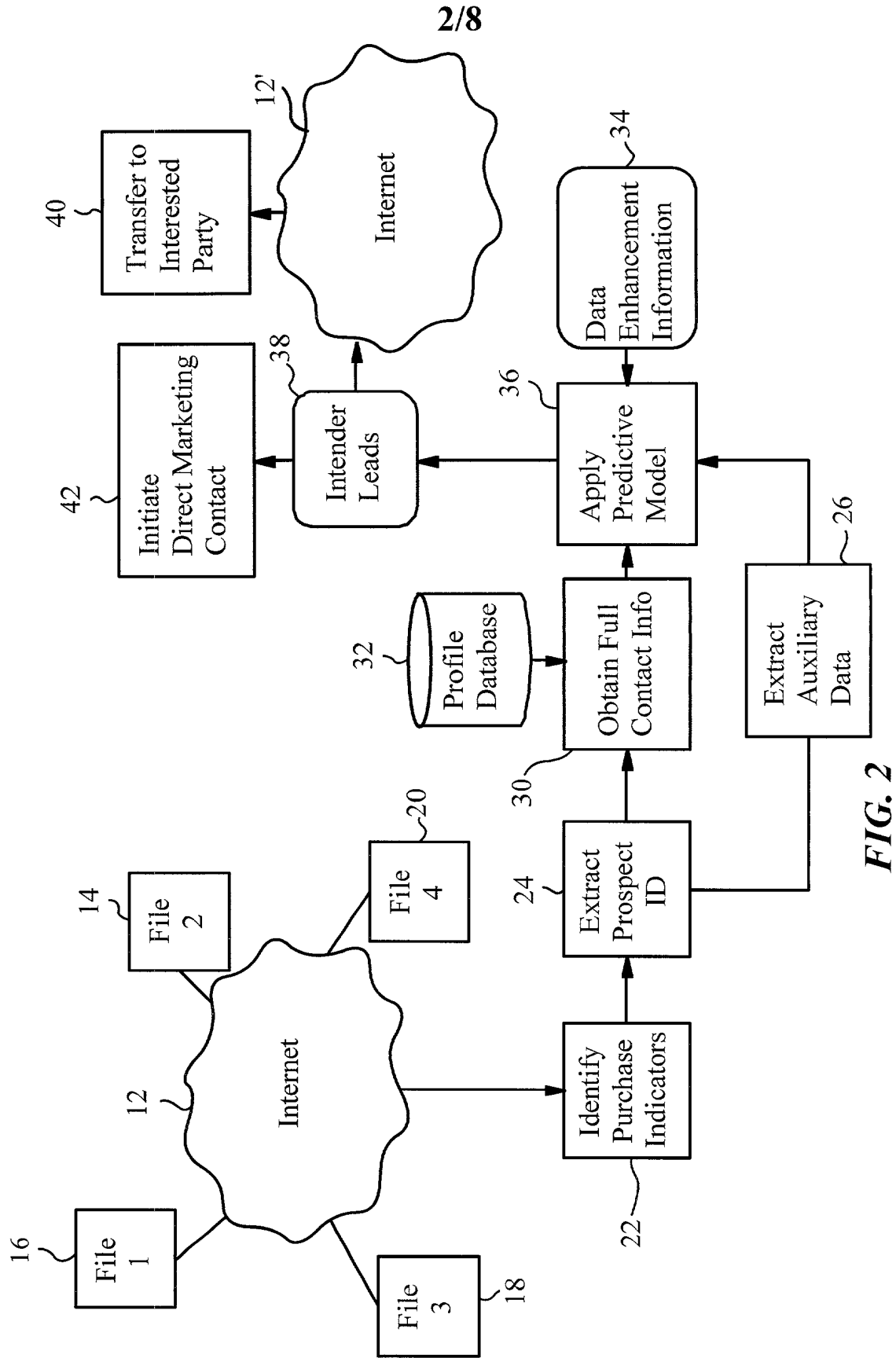
1
2

46.   The program storage device of claim 33 wherein said distributed computer system is the Internet.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of generating intender leads in a distributed computer system includes the steps of identifying purchase indicators and extracting prospect identifiers from the purchase indicators. Purchase indicators are pieces of data that represent a potential future purchase by a prospect. For example, an online classified advertisement selling an automobile is a purchase indicator for a potential future purchase of a new car by the old car seller. The prospect identifier, such as a telephone number or email address, uniquely identifies the prospect likely to make the future purchase. Preferably, the method also contains the steps of obtaining full contact information for the prospect from a profile database, applying a predictive model to the prospects to select intender leads, and transferring the intender leads to an interested party, such as a direct marketing service or sales force. An intender lead is a lead for a person intending to make a purchase of a particular product or service within a given time period. Only some of the prospects are actual intenders. Preferably, the method also includes the steps of extracting auxiliary data that is independent of the prospect from the purchase indicator, and obtaining data enhancement information about the prospect from data enhancement databases. The predictive model is preferably also applied to the data enhancement information and auxiliary data. The method is particularly well-suited for the Internet, which is a large source of publicly-available purchase indicators that is constantly updated. The intender leads are preferably transferred over the Internet, e.g. by email, so that they arrive at the sales force when they are still "hot."

Suspects

Prospects

Qualified Prospects ~10

Intenders

Customers

FIG. 1   PRIOR ART

FIG. 2

—50

52   Automotive Classifieds

Accura ▲	Integra ▲	No Maximum ▲	No Maximum ▲
BMW	Legend	$50,000	100,000
Ford ▼	500S ▼	$40,000 ▼	90,000
			80,000 ▼

Make   Model   Maximum Price

Maximum Mileage

Any year ▲	Sunday ▲
1998	Monday
1997 ▼	Tuesday ▼

Maximum Price   Select Day

Submit —54

FIG. 3   PRIOR ART

VW '86 Jetta GL 4dr, 5 spd, PW, Snrf, runs/look excl, Smogged
$1295 415-462-8341

VW '89 JETTA GD COND $2000/obo (510)-832-6143

VW '89 Jetta GLI, 87k, nu tires/tim belt/clutch, exc cond, $4700
(925)-274-8365/621-4385

VW '95 Jetta GLS blk/blk, all pwr, 67k, sunrf, exc cond. must sell,
moving 415-963-8487

90

FIG. 5   PRIOR ART

FIG. 4

100

VW '86 Jetta GL 4dr, 5 spd, PW, Snrf, runs/look excl, Smogged $1295 415-462-8341

VW '89 JETTA GD COND $2000/obo (510)-832-6143

VW '89 Jetta GLI, 87k, nu tires/tim belt/clutch, exc cond, $4700 (925)-274-8365/621-4385

VW '95 Jetta GLS blk/blk, all pwr, 67k, sunrf, exc cond. must sell, moving

VW '89 Jetta GLI, 87k, nu tires/tim belt/clutch, exc cond, $4700 (925) 274-8365 / 621-4383 ~102

(925) 274-8365
(925) 621-4385 ~104

VW '89 Jetta GLI, 87k, nu tires/tim belt/clutch, exc cond, $4700 ~106

Make: Volkswagen Year: 1989
Model: Jetta GLI
Mileage: 87,000 Miles
Price: $4700
Condition: excellent
Extras: new tires, timing belt, clutch
~110

Normalizer Config File ~108

	Telephone	Make	Model	Year	Mileage	Price	Dealer
112	9252748365	Volkswagen	Jetta	1989	87,000	4700	

FIG. 6

104

(925) 274-8365
(925) 621-4385

Profile
Database   —114

Barbara Murphy   barbaram3@hotmail.com
625 Main St.   bmurphy@blecker.com
Pleasanton, CA 94554   (925) 621-4385
(925) 274-8365   —116

Employer: Blecker, Inc.
Occupation/Job Title: Product Development Engineer
Age: 33
Gender: Female   —118
Household Income: $56,000
Marital Status: Single

                                                  120
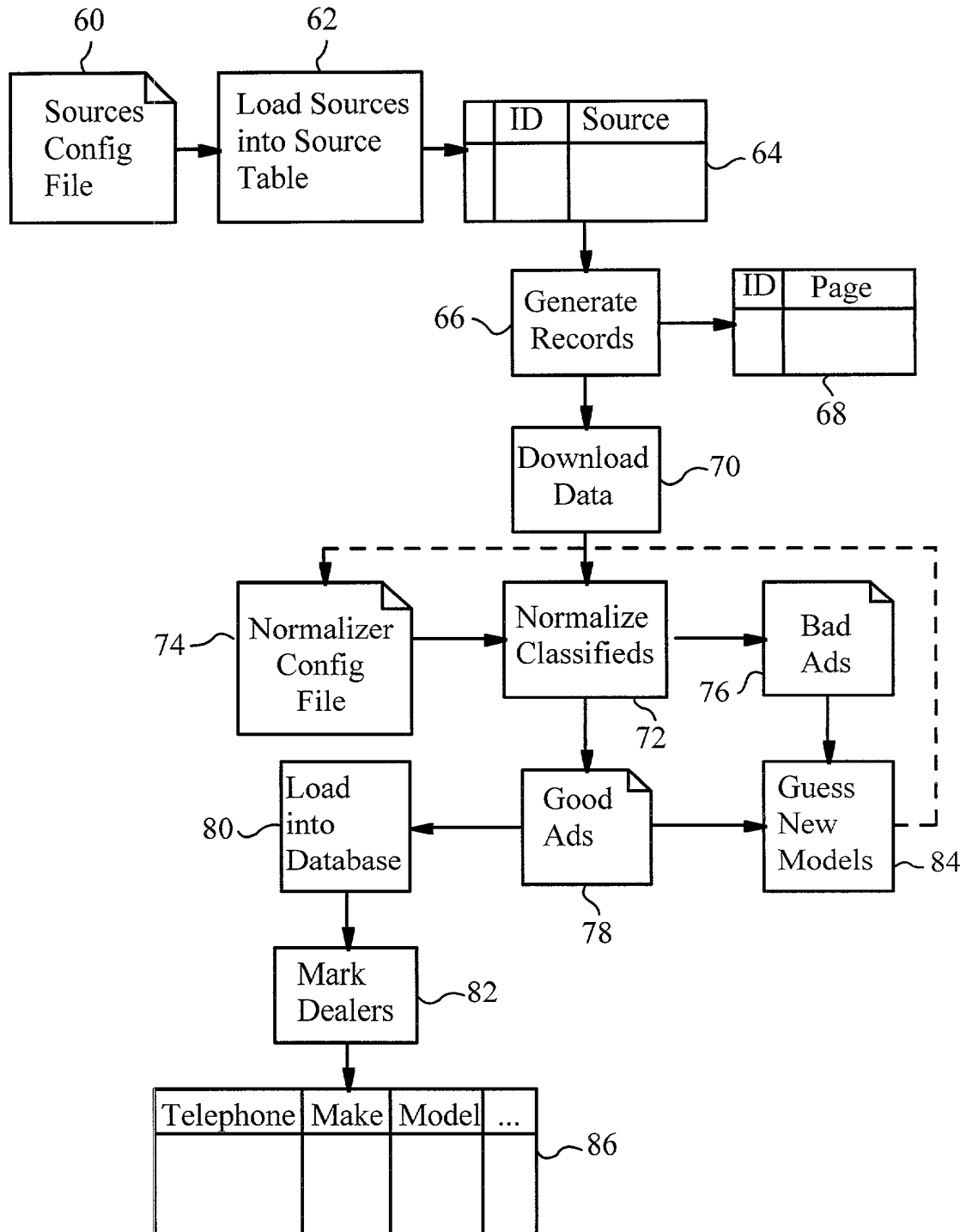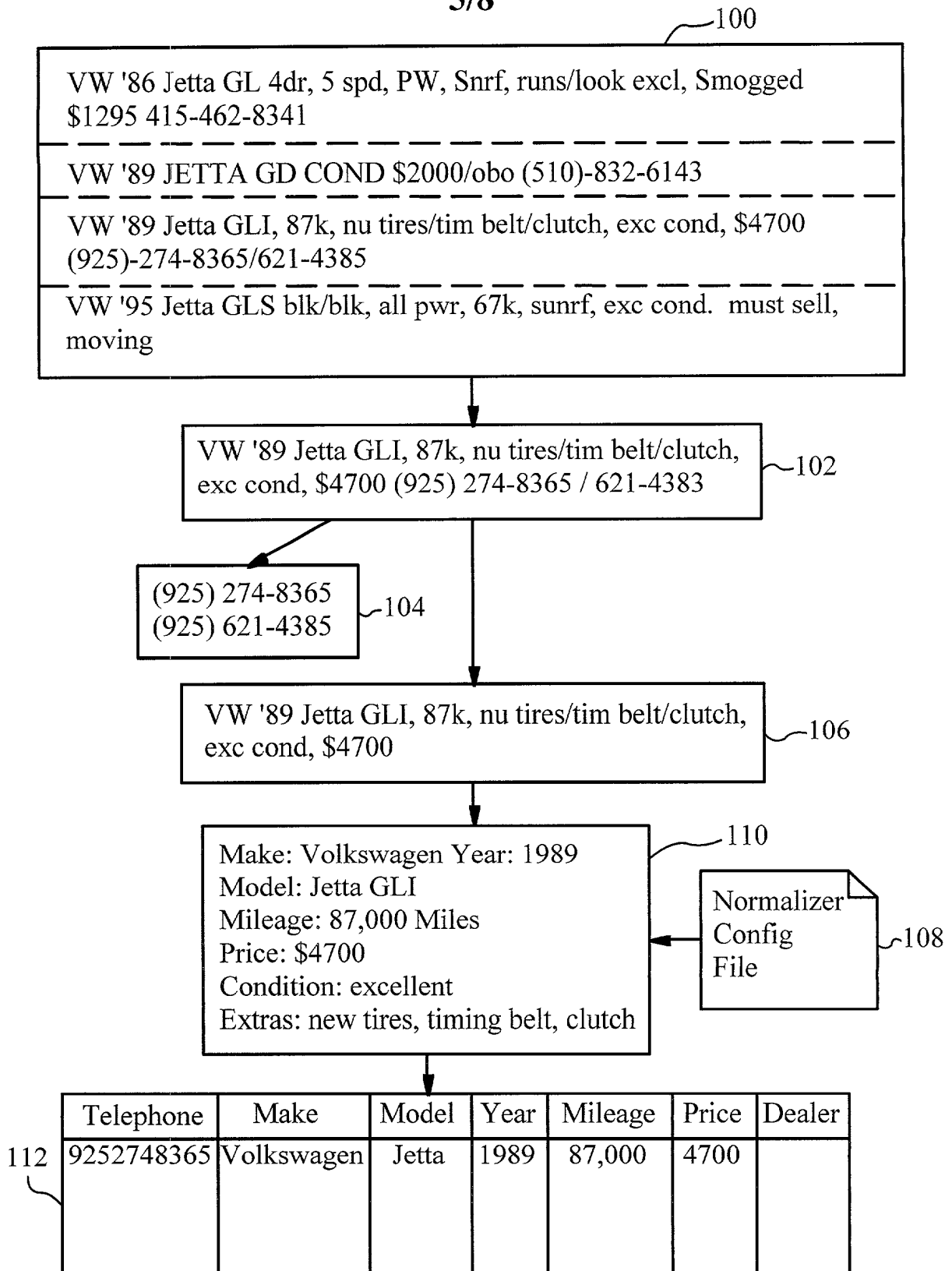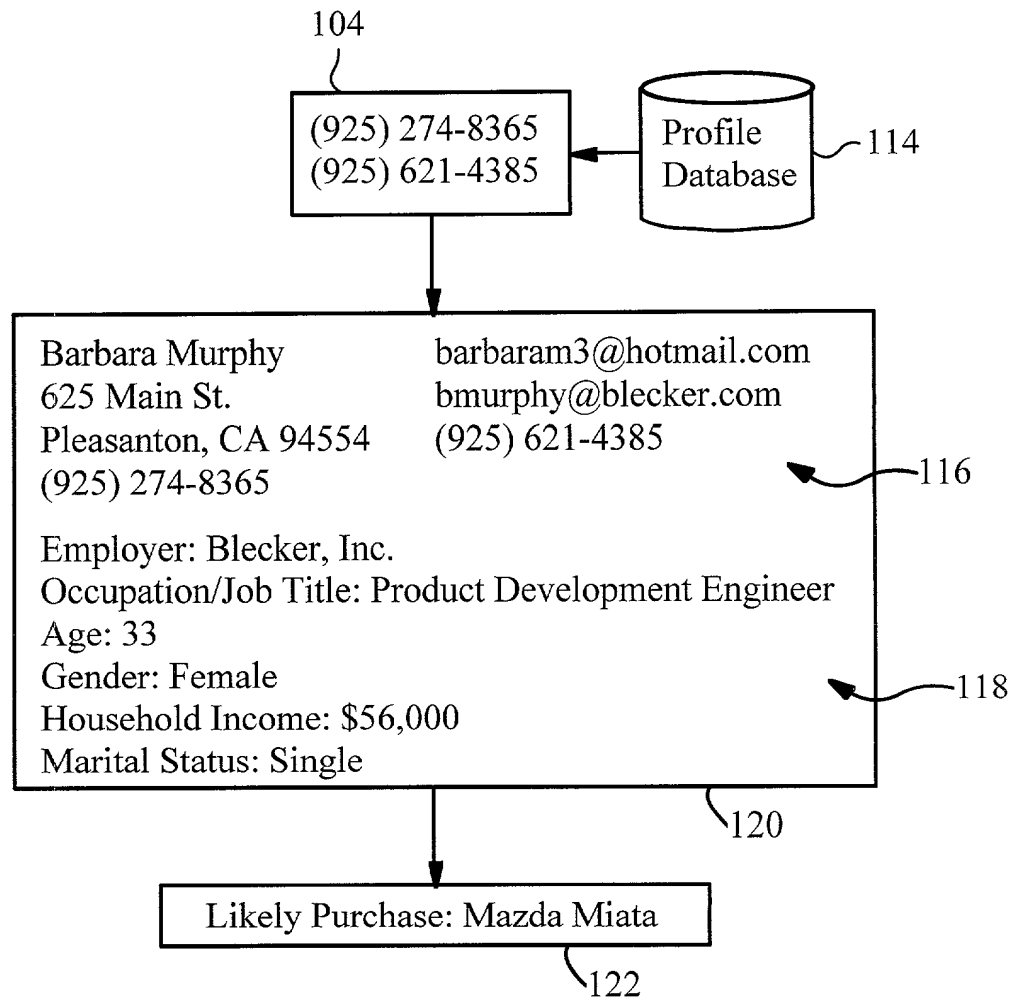
Likely Purchase: Mazda Miata

122

FIG. 7

120

Volkswagen Jetta - 1998 Alameda, California

Description: MUST SELL! Black 1998 VW Jetta GT, 5-speed, air conditioning, anti-lock brakes, air bags, keyless entry, power steering, alloy wheels, cruise control, and much more. Switching jobs and cannot afford to keep it! MOTIVATED SELLER!

Features: Sunroof - Anti-Lock Brakes - Alarm - Power Locks - Airbags One Owner - Air Conditioning

Date Posted: 12/27/99
Sold As: By Owner
Price: $ 13,000.00
Category: Four-Door Sedan
Color: Black
Milage: 19,000
Condition: Used
VIN: 3VWVB81H1WM631278

Contact: Jennifer Hansen
Email: jenhansen@hotmail.com Reply to this ad
Phone (Evening): (510) 831-2474
Location: Alameda, CA 94501
Other Ads: Listings from Jenhansen47
Ad ID automobiles-943045325-15220
Pricing: Used Car Pricing
Insurance: Insure this car
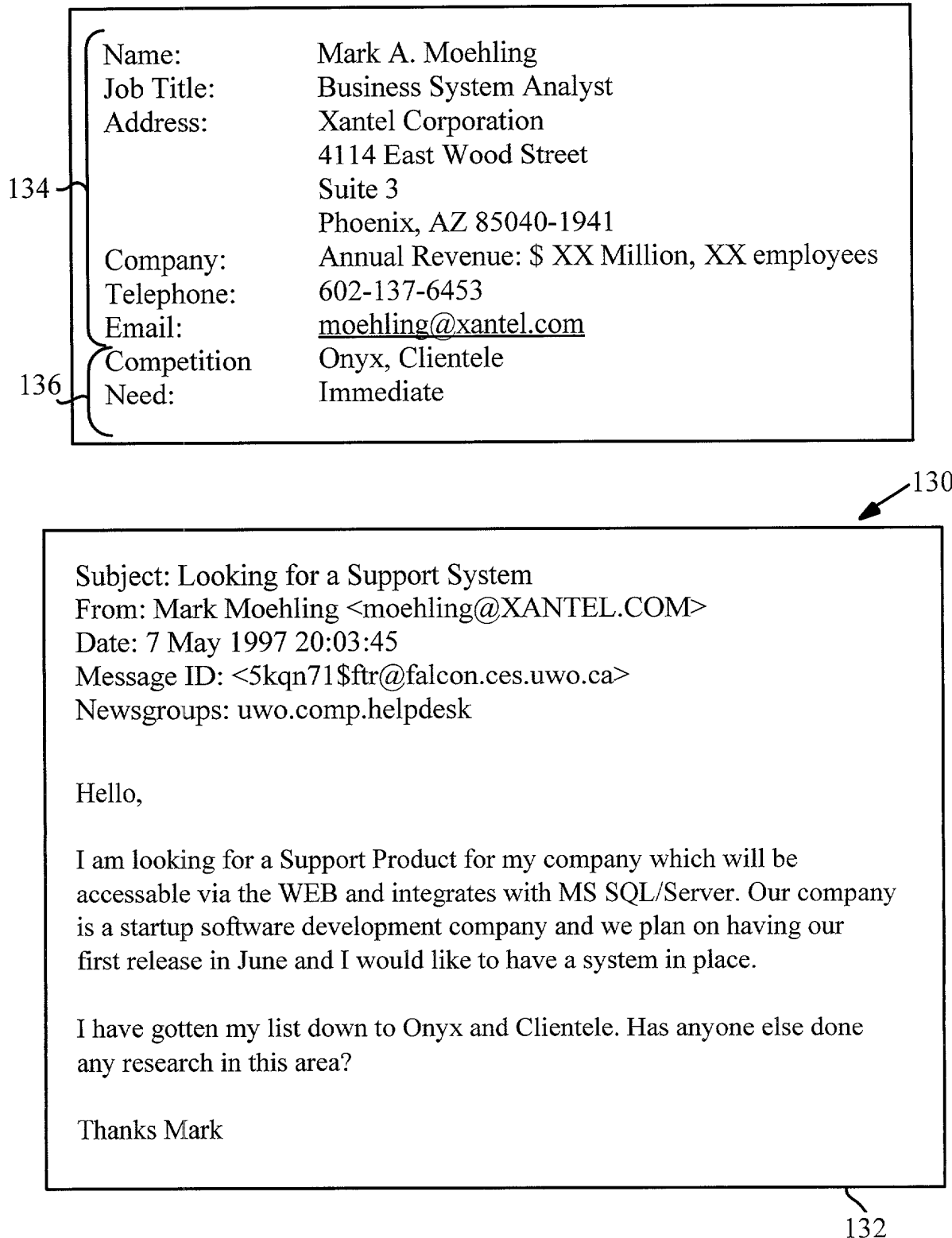**Finance:** Finance this car

FIG. 8   PRIOR ART

Name: Mark A. Moehling
Job Title: Business System Analyst
Address: Xantel Corporation
             4114 East Wood Street
             Suite 3
             Phoenix, AZ 85040-1941
Company: Annual Revenue: $ XX Million, XX employees
Telephone: 602-137-6453
Email: moehling@xantel.com
Competition Onyx, Clientele
Need: Immediate

134

136

130

Subject: Looking for a Support System
From: Mark Moehling <moehling@XANTEL.COM>
Date: 7 May 1997 20:03:45
Message ID: <5kqn71$ftr@falcon.ces.uwo.ca>
Newsgroups: uwo.comp.helpdesk

Hello,

I am looking for a Support Product for my company which will be
accessable via the WEB and integrates with MS SQL/Server. Our company
is a startup software development company and we plan on having our
first release in June and I would like to have a system in place.

I have gotten my list down to Onyx and Clientele. Has anyone else done
any research in this area?

Thanks Mark

132

FIG. 9

Declaration for Patent Application and Power of Attorney

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that my residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name, and that I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one is listed) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention described in the attached specification entitled **Internet-Enabled Lead Generation.**

First or Sole Inventor:	Full name:	**JEFFREY KOHL WILKINS**	Citizenship:	USA
	Residence:	**31504 Silvertide Drive, Union City, CA 94587**		
	Postal Address:	**same as above**		
Second Joint Inventor (if any):	Full name:	**JACK MARSHALL ZOKEN**	Citizenship:	USA
	Residence:	**1056 Sargent Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94087**		
	Postal Address:	**Same as above**		

I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above. I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a). I claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S)

Country	Application Number	Date of Filing	Priority Claimed Under 35 U.S.C. §119	
NONE			[ ] Yes	[ ] No

I claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56 which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing data of this application.

PRIOR U. S. APPLICATION(S)

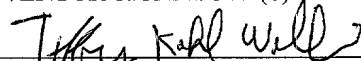| Application No.	Filing Date	Status			
60/116,445	**1/19/99**	[X] Provisional	[ ] Patented	[ ] Pending	[ ] Regular

I hereby appoint Thomas J. McFarlane, Reg. No. 39,299 , Marek Alboszta, Reg. No. 39,894, Joshua D. Isenberg, Reg. No., 41,088 as my agents with full power of substitution to prosecute this application and transact all business in the United States Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. Direct all correspondence to:

Marek Alboszta
426 Lowell Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301-3813
Telephone: 650-321-6630
Fax: 650-321-1621.

The attorney docket number for this case is: **SFT-101**.

I declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both under Title 18, §1001 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

INVENTOR SIGNATURE(S)

JEFFREY KOHL WILKINS	Date 1/18/00	JACK MARSHALL ZOKEN	Date 11/18/00

POWER OF ATTORNEY BY ASSIGNEE

The undersigned assignee of the entire interest in the attached application for Letters Patent for the invention entitled:

Internet-Enabled Lead Generation

by virtue of Assignment recorded concurrently herewith hereby appoints Thomas J. McFarlane, Reg. No. 39,299, Marek Alboszta, Reg. No. 39,894, Joshua D. Isenberg Reg. No., 41,088 as its agents to prosecute the attached application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith, said appointment to be to the exclusion of the inventor(s) and their attorney(s) in accordance with the provisions of Rule 32 of the Patent Office Rules of Practice.

Please direct all communication relative to said application to the following correspondence address:

Marek Alboszta
Lumen
426 Lowell Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94301
Telephone: 650-321-6630
Facsimile: 650-321-1621

I am duly authorized to sign this instrument on behalf of assignee corporation. I hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, title is in the assignee herein, and I affirm review of the Assignment document concurrently submitted and believe that the attached application has been assigned to assignee herein and that assignee therefore has the right to make this Power of Attorney and Exclusion of Inventor(s).

I declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further, that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

ASSIGNEE:

24/7 Media, Inc.
1250 Broadway, 27th Floor
New York, NY 10001-3701

Official Authorized to Act on Behalf of Assignee:

Signature: _____

Name: _____Jeff Wilkins_____

Title: _____Senior Vice President_____

Date: __1/18/00__